

What are Job Objectives?

Job objectives are written expressions of the major work you do and describe the specific results you expect to accomplish during the year. Job objectives are specific to you, your work, and your position within the organization.

Job Objectives:

- Communicate major responsibilities or contributions and the related outcomes that are expected of you;
- Focus on the desired results of your work and describe expected outcomes;
- Align with the mission, goals, and priorities of your organization;
- Are appropriate to your pay band and salary;
- Must reference the Performance Indicators that are appropriate for your pay schedule and pay band;
- Are documented in your performance plan;
- Are the basis for determining your final rating of record; and
- May change from year to year or within a year due to changing work focus or organizational goals.

NSPS requires that you have a minimum of one job objective. The best practice is to have between three to five job objectives.

Creating Effective Job Objectives

An effective job objective answers the following questions:

- What do I need to achieve? What result do I want to accomplish?
- How will achieving this job objective help my organization? Is there a “line of sight” between the job objective and my organization’s mission?
- Does the job objective focus on a major component of work I am responsible for accomplishing within the period of performance?
- By when must I do this?
- How will I know if I am successful?
- What critical behaviors am I expected to exhibit?
- Is the job objective appropriate to my salary level, pay schedule, and pay band?
- Is the job objective written to the “Valued Performer” (level 3) Performance Indicator for my pay band?

SMART and TEAM are two models that provide a structure to help you answer these questions and create effective job objectives.

SMART

Specific: Your job objective describes, clearly and concisely, what you expect to accomplish in the coming year.

Measurable: The result of your job objective is observable or verifiable through appropriate quantity, quality, resources, or time measurements.

Aligned: Your job objective shows a clear line of sight between your organization's mission and goals and your work.

Realistic/**R**elevant: Your job objective is challenging yet attainable, the outcome is within your control, and the expected results are appropriate to your responsibilities, pay band, and salary.

Timed: Your job objective identifies realistic time-frames for completion.

TEAM

Target: Your job objective describes what you expect to accomplish and what the final product/service/deliverable looks like.

Evaluation: Your job objective clarifies the criteria against which you will be evaluated and describes the expected and appropriate levels of effort, expertise, complexity, and independence for successful completion.

Alignment: Your job objective is linked to your organization's mission and goals with a clear line of sight with what you achieve in your work.

Measurement: The result of your job objective is observable or verifiable and includes appropriate quantity, quality, resources, or time measurements.

Effective job objectives clearly identify performance expectations so you and your rating official have a shared understanding of the criteria against which the rating official evaluates performance. The Performance Indicators describe the differences between expected levels of performance based on criteria such as the amount of guidance needed, effectiveness in achieving the job objective, contributions, ability to prioritize work, and professional conduct. While copying the exact wording of the Performance Indicators is not recommended, an effective job objective addresses the critical criteria.

While your rating official is responsible for developing your job objectives, it is in your own best interest to be involved in writing them so that you are aware of and understand what is expected of you. Work with your rating official (in person, if possible) to establish your performance expectations and job objectives. Communication is the key to reaching a shared understanding. Once your job objectives are established, a higher level reviewer approves them.

Mandatory Supervisory Job Objective

Managers/supervisors must be assigned at least one job objective that directly addresses their supervisory role under NSPS. This mandatory job objective must cover these criteria:

- Communicating performance expectations and holding employees responsible for accomplishing them;
- Making meaningful distinctions among employees based on performance and contribution;
- Fostering and rewarding excellent performance;
- Addressing poor performance;
- Ensuring that employees are assigned a rating of record when required; and

- Adhering to laws and regulations governing merit-systems principles, prohibited personnel practices, and equal employment opportunity.

The leadership contributing factor must be selected for the supervisory job objective.

Updating Your Job Objectives

Your job objectives may be updated and revised throughout the year to reflect changes in position, job responsibility, or work priorities. These changes most commonly occur at the Interim Review, during which you and your rating official should check for the continued relevance of each job objective. Typically, job objectives are not changed 90 days prior to the end of the performance cycle so you have sufficient time to adequately demonstrate your accomplishments. Whenever new job objectives are added, they must be approved by a higher level reviewer.

Documentation of Job Objectives

Your job objectives are documented in the Performance Appraisal Application (PAA). You access the PAA through your MyBiz/MyWorkplace account. The PAA is used to manage the entire performance management process from establishing your performance plan to rating your performance.

Learn More about Job Objectives

For more information about job objectives, refer to the following resources on the NSPS Connect learning Web page:

- NSPS 101 web-based tutorial
- iSuccess web-based tutorial
- *Performance Management for Managers/Supervisors* course
- *Performance Management for Employees* course
- *From Expectations to Accomplishments* Self-Study Guide
- *Pay Pool Management for Rating Officials and Employees* course
- Action Verbs Tip Sheet
- Cascading Goals Worksheet
- Contributing Factors Fact Sheet
- Job Objective Worksheet
- Performance Indicators
- *Performance Indicators Success Level Questionnaire*
- *Critical Components of Performance Indicators*
- Performance Indicators Fact Sheet
- *Performance Planning Interview Questionnaire*
- *Use of Job Objectives throughout NSPS Diagram*